Research Notes for Mary Ellen McEvoy Roach (1872 - 1935)

Research Overview:

Mary Ellen McEvoy's early life was shaped by frequent movement and repeated loss. In her childhood, the family moved through New York, Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan, with siblings born and dying across those years. Of her known siblings, several died in infancy; one brother survived, but only into early adulthood. The record shows a household repeatedly reconfigured by relocation and death, with little opportunity for continuity. Her formative years unfold as a sequence of transitions—new places, brief arrivals of siblings, and early endings—rather than a family rooted in one location.

By early adulthood, Mary Ellen was living and working outside her parents' home, employed as a bookkeeper and recorded independently in city directories. Her marriage in 1893 marked the start of a new household that proved markedly different from the one she came from. As a wife and mother, she experienced a long-term residence in one place, a large surviving family, and a sustained presence in church and community life.

Speculative Narrative:

Intentionally left blank.

Timeline:

18 Nov 1872 – **Born** at Dowagiac, Cass, Michigan.[1]

1875 -Death of brother John "Johnnie" McEvoy (1869 - 1875) at an unknown place, probably in the US.[2]

1880 - U.S. Census, not identified; location unknown.[3]

11 Jul 1883 -Birth of brother Edmond Eugene "Edward" McEvoy (1883 - 1906) at Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan.[4]

11 Jul 1885 - Birth and death of brother Frederick McEvoy (1885 - 1885) at Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan.[5]

By 1891 - Directory

Mary Ellen ("Miss Nellie") was living outside her parents' home and working as a bookkeeper, eventually for E.D.G. Holden and Sons.

Early 1890s - How Mary Ellen McEvoy met Samuel Roach

After moving from Thorndale, Ontario, to Grand Rapids, Samuel Roach boarded at a rooming house owned by Charles Patrick McEvoy and his wife, Ellen Emperor. It was there that he met their daughter, Mary Ellen McEvoy.

---

[1] "Michigan Births, 1867-1902", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NQNK-H9Q: Fri Mar 08 23:47:37 UTC 2024), Entry for Mary McEvoy and Charles McEvoy, 1872.

[2] Death record for brother Johnnie McEvoy

[3] 1880 US Census

[4] "Michigan Births, 1867-1902", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NQCV-4MQ: Fri Mar 08 18:03:05 UTC 2024), Entry for Eugene E. McEvoy and C. P. McEvoy, 1883.

[5] Michigan, Death Records, 1867-1950, Frederick McEvoy

Following their marriage, Mary Ellen's parents built the house at 710 Lafayette NE, which became the family home. Their oldest daughter, Helen Roach, continued to live there until she entered a nursing home in about 1979.

1891 – Photograph of Mary Ellen McEvoy, age 19, taken in Macon, Georgia; purpose of visit not identified.

The reason for her presence in Macon is not identified; possibilities include education or a visit with her cousin Mary Ellen McAvoy (daughter of Luke and Annie McAvoy).

23 May 1893 - Marriage at Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan.[6]
St James Church. Witnesses: Thomas H. and Nellie McShane.

20 Mar 1894 - Birth of daughter Helen Marie Roach (1894 - 1982) at Ada, Kent, Michigan.[7]

1894 - Family Bible[8]

Family Events: Bible and Register of Mary Ellen McEvoy; Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan; Family Birth, Marriage, and Deaths Within the Family; Events of March 1894 through 1953.

5 Jul 1895 - Birth of daughter Elizabeth Louise Roach (1895 - 1964) at Ada, Kent, Michigan.[9]

[6] Michigan Marriages 1868 - 1925, Kent County, Michigan, marriage of Samuel J. Roach and Mary E. McEvoy, May 22, 1893, no 6685. Family Search.

[7] "Michigan Births 1867 - 1902," Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan, birth of Helen Marie Roach, 20 March 1894, no. 3198. FamilySearch.

[8] Family Events: Bible and Register of Mary Ellen McEvoy; Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan; Family Birth, Marriage and Deaths Within the Family; Events of March 1894 through 1953.

[9] "Michigan Births, 1867 - 1902," Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan. Birth of Bessie L Roach, 5 Jul 1895, no 5667; FamilySearch.

5 Aug 1897 -Birth of son Charles Hubert "Hugh" Roach (1897 - 1974) at Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan.[10]

1898 - Directory at 404 N Lafayette in Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan.[11]

1899 - Directory at 404 N Lafayette in Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan.[12]

City directory listings are retained here to document the family's residence during a period when the family was not located in the 1900 census.

17 Dec 1899 - Birth of daughter Frances Lamira Roach (1899 - 1983) at Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan.[13]

1900 - U.S. Census

Not located; family appears in city directories at 404 N. Lafayette during this period.

15 Nov 1901 – **Birth of son Gerald Edward Roach (1901 - 1955**) at Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan.[14]

8 Nov 1905 – **Birth of son S. Jerome Roach (1905 - 1970**) at Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan.[15]

[10] "Michigan Births, 1867-1902", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NQXZ-1YC: Sat Mar 09 03:34:17 UTC 2024), Entry for Chas.h. Roach and Samuel Roach, 05 Aug 1897.

[11] U.S. City Directories, 1821-1989, Grand Rapids, MI

[12] U.S. City Directories, 1821-1989, Grand Rapids, MI

[13] "Michigan Births, 1867 - 1902," Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan. Birth of Francis Lamyra Roach, 17 December 1899, no 15201; FamilySearch.

[14] "Michigan Births, 1867 - 1902," Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan. Birth of Gerald Edward Roach, 15 November 1901, no 17584; FamilySearch.

[15] U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936-2007, S Jerome Roach

11 Aug 1906 -Death of brother Edmond Eugene "Edward" McEvoy (1883 - 1906) at Chicago, Cook, Illinois.[16]

24 Oct 1907 - Death of father Charles Patrick McEvoy (1841 - 1907) at Cannonsburg, Kent, Michigan.[17]

16 Oct 1909 -Birth of son Thomas Gerard Lucian Roach (1909 - 1977) at Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan.[18]

1910 - U.S. Census in Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan.[19]

Samuel Roach - head of household, male, white, age 44, married, born in Canada, father born England, mother born Ireland

Marie Roach - female, white, age 34, married, born in Michigan, parents born in Canada/ Ireland.

Helen Roach - female, white, age 25, single, born in Michigan, parents born in Canada/Michigan.

Bessie Roach- female, white, age 14, single, born in Michigan, parents born in Canada/Michigan.

Hubert Roach- male, white, age 12, single, born in Michigan, parents born in Canada/Michigan.

Frances Roach- female, white, age 10, single, born in Michigan, parents born in Canada/Michigan.

---

[16] "Illinois, Cook County Deaths, 1871-1998," , *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:N7ZP-MZ7: 8 March 2018), Eugene E. McEvoy, 11 Aug 1906; citing, Cook, Illinois, United States, source reference cn 11092, record number 3, Cook County Courthouse, Chicago; FHL microfilm 1,239,746.

[17] "Find a Grave Index," database, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVVY-DZK2: 13 June 2023), Charles Patrick McEvoy, ; Burial, Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan, United States of America, Saint Andrews Catholic Cemetery; citing record ID 29117222, *Find a Grave*, http://www.findagrave.com.

[18] Birth: State of Michigan; Department of Community Health; Certificate of Live Birth; Thomas Gerald Lucien Roach; 16 October 1909; Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan; Issued 5 September 2014.

[19] "United States Census, 1910", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:ML5T-LN7: Tue Jul 23 16:28:11 UTC 2024), Entry for Samuel J Roach and Marie Roach, 1910.

Gerald Roach- male, white, age 8, single, born in Michigan, parents born in Canada/Michigan.

Jerome Roach- male, white, age 10, single, born in Michigan, parents born in Canada/Michigan.

Lucien Roach - male, white, age 0, single, born in Michigan, parents born in Canada/Michigan.

1 Apr 1911 - Birth of daughter Dorothy Esther Roach (1911 - 1982) at Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan.[20]

1920 - U.S. Census at Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan[21]

Samuel J Roach - head, owns, male, white, age 54, married, can read, can write, born Canada, father born England, mother born Ireland, mailman.

Mary E Roach - wife, female, white, age 47, married, can read, can write, born Michigan, father born Canada, mother born Ireland.

Helen M Roach - daughter , female, white, age 25, born Michigan, father born Canada, mother born Michigan.

Elizabeth L Roach - daughter , female, white, age 24, born Michigan, father born Canada, mother born Michigan.

C Hubert Roach - son, male, white, age 22, born Michigan, father born Canada, mother born Michigan.

Frances L Roach - daughter , female, white, age 20, born Michigan, father born Canada, mother born Michigan.

[20] "United States Social Security Death Index," database, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JLMY-PMW: 9 January 2021), Dorothy Hansen, Jun 1982; citing U.S. Social Security Administration, *Death Master File*, database (Alexandria, Virginia: National Technical Information Service, ongoing).

[21] "United States Census, 1930", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XQBJ-8SD: Sun Mar 10 05:35:59 UTC 2024), Entry for Samuel J Roach and Mary E Roach, 1930.

1930 - U.S. Census at Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan[22]

Samuel J Roach - Head, owns, worth ?, has a radio, male, white, age 64, married, first at age ?, born Canada, parents born England/Ireland, mailman.

Mary E Roach - wife, female, white, age 57, married, first at age ?, born Michigan, parents born Canada/Michigan.

Helen M Roach - daughter, female, white, single, age 36, born Michigan, parents born Canada/Michigan.

Gerald Roach, 28 - son, female, white, single, age 28, born Michigan, parents born Canada/Michigan.

Jerome Roach - son, male, white, single, age 36, born Michigan, parents born Canada/Michigan.

Thomas Roach - son, male, white, single, age 20, born Michigan, parents born Canada/Michigan.

19 Mar 1935 - Death at Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan.[23]

Mar 1935 - Obituary

"Mary E. Roach, Long A Resident of G.R. Expires

Mrs. Mary E. Roach, 62, wife of Samuel J. Roach, former mail carrier and manager of the Manufacturers building, and daughter of Charles P. McEvoy, whose hostelry on W. Bridge st., half a century ago was the haven of Irish immigrants to western Michigan, died yesterday at her home, 710 Lafayette ave., NE.

Mrs. Roach, a native of Dowagiac, came to Grand Rapids with her parents 52 years ago.

[22] "United States Census, 1930", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XQBJ-8SD: Sun Mar 10 05:35:59 UTC 2024), Entry for Samuel J Roach and Mary E Roach, 1930.

[23] Michigan Department of Health, death certificate state office no. 3276 (1935), Mary E Roach; Division of Vital Statistics, Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan. Death notice of Mrs. Mary E. Roach. Grand Rapids Herald Mar 1935.

She is survived by her husband; four sons, C Hubert, Gerald, Thomas, and S. Jerome, all of Grand Rapids; four daughters, Miss Helen M. and Dorothy E., and Mrs. Ed. Blakely of this city, and Mrs. EP Whalen of Chicago.

She was a member of St. Alphonsus church, where funeral services will be held Friday morning at 9 o'clock."

22 Mar 1935 - Burial at St. Andrews Cemetery in Grand Rapids, Kent, Michigan.[24]

[24] "Find a Grave Index," database, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVVK-RV7Z: 19 May 2020), Mary Ellen McEvoy Roach, 1935; Burial, ,; citing record ID, *Find a Grave*, http://www.findagrave.com.